



# PRESS RELEASE

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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U.S. Agency for International Development

Strategic Development Office (503) 2501-3471

U.S. Embassy Public Affairs Section (503) 2501-2471

Email: [kazucena@usaid.gov](mailto:kazucena@usaid.gov)

<http://www.usaid.gov/sv>

<http://elsalvador.usembassy.gov/>

## STUDY ON TRANSPARENCY PRESENTED

**SAN SALVADOR**— The U.S. Embassy, through the U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) Transparency and Governance Program, presented today the results of a study entitled, "Building Transparency in the Municipalities: diagnostic and recommendations to promote transparency at the local level."

U.S. Ambassador to El Salvador Charles L. Glazer, USAID El Salvador Mission Director Deborah Kennedy-Iraheta, and Transparency and Governance Program Director Carlos Guerrero presided over the opening ceremony. The purpose of the investigation is to describe and analyze transparency mechanisms in the municipalities as well as to identify action steps to improve municipal work.

"The study that will be presented today will, I hope, provide new insight into how to make better use of Salvadoran law (the new Law on Government Ethics and Title IX of the Municipal Code, inter alia) as a tool to improving public expenditure management and through this, heightened public confidence in government," Ambassador Glazer said, acknowledging efforts Salvadorans have made to strengthen ethical values and transparency.

The study findings, research results and action proposals were presented by consultant Marcos Rodriguez and commented by Milagro Navas, President of the Board of Directors of the El Salvador Corporation of Municipalities (COMURES); Juan Hector Vidal, Economic Adviser for the National Association of Private Enterprise (ANEP); Ivan Morales, Sustainable Development Coordinator for the United Nations Development Programme; Mario Ponce, President of the Legislative Assembly Commission for Municipal Affairs, and Mario Lopez, representative of the Coalition for Transparency and Decentralization.

Copies of the study can be obtained at Casals & Associates by calling (503) 2237-9292. The study encompasses all experiences by representatives of several sectors and institutions related to local development, such as municipalities, civil society organizations, international cooperation agencies, academic institutions and NGOs. Additionally, the study is based on consultations with around 200 municipal councils on what transparency actions they need to take to implement Title IX of the Municipal Code.

Study proposals include: conditioning funds transfer for mayor's offices and other local financing mechanisms to law abiding; creating incentives to publicly recognize local transparency and accountability practices; articulating the fulfillment of municipal legislation with the control function of institutions such as the Judiciary and the Court of Accounts; and establishing a proportional, or at least plural, representation within municipal councils.

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